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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/072,272

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EXAMINER

CHONG, YONG SOO

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1617

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

02/08/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/072,272	Applicant(s) STRONG ET AL.	
	Examiner Yong S. Chong	Art Unit 1617	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 October 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2 and 5-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-2, 5-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Status of the Application

This Office Action is in response to applicant's arguments filed on 10/26/2007. Claim(s) 3-4 have been cancelled. Claim(s) 21 has been added. Claim(s) 1-2, 5-21 are pending. Claim(s) 1 and 6 have been amended. Claim(s) 21 has been withdrawn as being drawn to a non-elected species as set forth in the restriction requirement filed on 10/3/2003. Claim(s) 1-2, 5-20 are examined herein.

Applicant's arguments have been fully considered but found not persuasive. The rejection(s) of the last Office Action are maintained for reasons of record and modified below as a result of Applicant's amendments to the claims. The following new rejections will also apply.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1-2, 5-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claims contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Although there is support for "≥50% to ≤100%" occult component of the lesion in Applicant's originally filed disclosure, there is no support for ">50% to <100%".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter, which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim(s) 1-2, 5-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The limitation in claim 1 "or both (a) and (b)" renders the claim indefinite because there is no alternative language specifically for (a) and (b) recited in claim 1 before the aforementioned limitation. For examination purposes and for Applicant's convenience, claim 1 will be interpreted as selecting a subject assessed as having either (a) or (b), or both (a) and (b).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham vs John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 1-2, 5-12, 14-18, 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over TAP Report 1 ("Photodynamic Therapy of Subfoveal Choroidal Neovascularization in Age-related Macular Degeneration with Verteporfin." *Arch Ophthalmol.* 1999; 117:1329-1345) (the TAP Report).

The instant claims are directed to methods of treating an occult choroidal neovascular (CNV) lesion comprising administering photodynamic therapy to a subject having Occult CNV, wherein the subject is assessed as having either or both (a) a small lesion with a size less than about 4-5 disc areas or (b) poor visual acuity of less than about 65 letters prior to treatment and wherein the occult lesion comprise an occult component of >50% to <100% of the lesion.

The TAP Report teaches the instantly claimed method. Tap Report teaches methods of administering verteporfin, a green porphyrin (which is also known as BPD-MA, see Reg Number 129497-78-5) to patients suffering from Occult CNV. (see page 1330 under the heading Patient Selection, last para.). Out of the 402 Patients in the Verteporfin arm of the study, at least 305 patients had evidence of Occult CNV (see Table 2 at page 1334, last criteria under the category Evidence of Occult CNV). Further,

out of the same 402 patients at least 199 patients had a visual acuity of less than 53 letters (see Table 2, Verteporfin Arm, under the category Visual Acuity criteria). Thus, at least about 100 patients who had received a photodynamic regimen of verteporfin, had evidence of Occult CNV with visual acuity of less than 65.

Further, Table 5 shows benefit from verteporfin therapy on patients with $\geq 50\%$ classic CNV (or $\leq 50\%$ occult CNV). Furthermore, the upper limit of the claimed invention (99% occult CNV) is also obvious because of the teaching that "the subgroup with no classic CNV (100% occult CNV) had a large treatment benefit" from pg. 1339 of the TAP Report.

Examiner also states that among the population in the Verteporfin Arm, 259 appear to have lesion size of less than 6 disc areas (see page 1335, table 2, under Verteporfin Arm, Under the Area of Lesion, MPS Disc Areas criteria). Therefore, the population who showed Occult CNV in the TAP Report and further received verteporfin, are the same as the instantly claimed population. Said population received an aqueous Verteporfin solution in amount of about 6 mg/m^2 (see abstract, also page 1332, at 1st col). Fifteen minutes after administration of the Verteporfin the CNV lesions were irradiated with a laser light for about 83 seconds in a light exposure of 50 J/cm^2 . (see col 1 page 1332). Accordingly, the limitations of claims 14-18 are met.

All method steps of the instantly claimed process are described for the population who showed Occult CNV prior to the therapy in the TAP Report Verteporfin Arm. Accordingly, the instantly claimed intended purpose is inherently achieved in the said population.

Applicant is also informed that the recitation of 45% efficacy of therapy in Occult CNV group, as recited in page 1338 is not a teaching away, because such conclusion does not mean that no patient has benefited from the methodology described in Verteporfin Arm of the TAP Report. Rather, such percentage is only viewed as a comparison to the control group. Examiner adds that the 33.1% of the TAP Report's Verteporfin Arm included lesion. TAP Report only fails to explicitly state that the patients in the Verteporfin Arm of the study had an occult component of >50% to <100% of the lesion.

Nevertheless, absent a showing of unexpected results or evidence to the contrary, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to practice the method steps of TAP Report to treat patients with occult CNV lesion having an occult component of >50% to <100% of the lesion, because as shown by the Report, one of ordinary skill in the art would have had a reasonable expectation of success to observe some degree of improvement in ocular condition of the patients suffering from said occult CNV.

Claims 13 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the TAP Report as applied to claims 1-2, 5-12, 14-18, 20 in view of Zeimer (US Patent 5,935,942).

The teachings of the TAP report are described above. The TAP report only fails to specifically describe attachment the use of a targeting ligand and the dosing of its photosensitizer per body weight of subjects.

Zeimer is used to describe the same process as in TAP report except that the photosensitizer is encapsulated or coupled with a targeting or tissue specific agent (see col 12, lines 28-50; col 14, lines 15-col 24). The process of Zeimer employs targeted liposomes (col 25-26) for patients having Occult CNV.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to add a targeting agent, such as an antibody, to the photosensitizer employed in TAP report, because as suggested by Zeimer, the ordinary skill in the art would have had a reasonable expectation of success in improving the clinical outcome.

Further, absent a showing of criticality, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to optimize the dosing ranges of the photosensitizer in TAP report by routine experimentation and express it based on the body weight of subjects.

Response to Arguments

Applicant argues that the TAP Report explicitly teaches that patients with greater than 50% to less than 100% occult CNV achieved no benefit from verteporfin PDT therapy. Applicant points to Table 5 (pg. 1340) in the Tap Report 1, where there was no significant differential between verteporfin-treated patients and placebo-treatment group. Applicant point to the author's conclusion that "no appreciable difference was observed in the group of patients with lesions in which the area of classic CNV was greater than 0% but less than 50% of the area of the entire lesion at baseline."

This is not persuasive because the results that there was no benefit from verteporfin therapy in Table 5 only refers to the subset of patients with >0 to $<50\%$ classic CNV (or >50 to $<100\%$ occult CNV). However, there is no denying the large benefit of verteporfin in the subset of patients with $\geq 50\%$ of classic CNV (or $\leq 50\%$ occult CNV) as disclosed also in Table 5. So, the data can infer that a patient with 50% occult CNV benefits from verteporfin therapy. Therefore, it would be obvious to administer verteporfin therapy to a patient with 51% occult CNV due to routine experimentation and optimization. Furthermore, the upper limit of the claimed invention (99% occult CNV) is also obvious because of the teaching that "the subgroup with no classic CNV (100% occult CNV) had a large treatment benefit" from pg. 1339 of the TAP Report.

Applicant is reminded that the standard for obviousness is not absolute but a reasonable expectation of success. In this manner, it is obvious to experiment with a subgroup of patients on the outer limits of the claimed range of ≥ 50 to $\leq 100\%$ occult CNV. Therefore, absent a teaching of unexpected results or the criticality of the claimed range, it is obvious over the cited prior art.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not

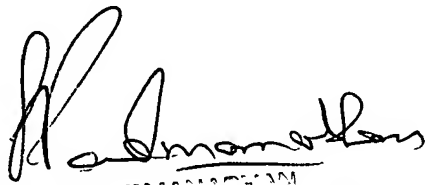
mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Yong S. Chong whose telephone number is (571)-272-8513. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 9-6.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, SREENI PADMANABHAN can be reached on (571)-272-0629. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571)-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

YSC


SREENI PADMANABHAN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER